

TEACHER'S CORNER – MARCH 2017

PROMOTING LEARNER ENGAGEMENT

Many teachers, new and experienced, can struggle to engage students. Constant distractions such as technology, talking, or daydreaming can divert students' attention away from the tasks at hand. Teachers are then forced to spend extra class time re-engaging and refocusing students' attention. Teachers are fortunate though. According to research, "Student engagement is malleable, and teachers have the ability to design contexts and tasks that encourage or discourage student engagement" (Parsons, Nuland, & Parsons, 2014, p. 25). When it comes to engaging students, teachers have a lot of power. Setting up a classroom environment that fosters unity and a sense of belonging for each learner is a critical component of continued learner engagement. It is also crucial to design tasks that are not only authentic and collaborative, but also offer choice (2014). By taking the steps necessary to ensure that learners are engaged, teachers overcome another hurdle in the classroom: they are able to better support student success and nurture academic achievement (Skinner & Pitzer, 2012).

In our Teacher's Corner this month, we offer four strategies, with examples, that promote learner engagement in the classroom. Try one of these strategies with your students and then adapt another to fit your students' specific needs.

Additional Resources

Engaging learners can be fun, and though it takes time, the outcomes are almost always positive. If you are looking for more ideas or additional strategies, you can review some of the resources listed here.

- [AE Webinar 4.2: Strategies for Engaging Young Learners](#)
- [AE Webinar: Making Learning Fun: Interactive Strategies to Student Motivation and Engagement in your Classroom](#)
- [AE Webinar 2.3: Tips and Tools to Strengthen Participation and Engagement in Online Learning Contexts](#)

References

Parsons, S. A., Richey Nuland, L., & Ward Parsons, A. (2014). The ABCs of student engagement. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 95(8), 23-27.

Skinner, E.A. & Pitzer, J.R. (2012). Developmental dynamics of student engagement, coping, and everyday resilience. In S.L. Christenson, A.L. Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *The handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 21-44). New York, NY: Springer Science.